



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Woodford County Public Schools Takes Honors in National Battle of the Buildings Competition *Simmons Elementary Team Leads District-Wide Effort to Reduce Energy Consumption*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (May 13, 2015) – The Woodford County Public Schools finished in the top 10 in the national U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) ENERGY STAR "Battle of the Buildings Competition: Team Challenge for 2014."

The Woodford County Public School team ranked eighth, competing against 5,500 individual buildings from across the U.S., Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. The school system was recognized for reducing energy consumption by 10.2 percent over the previous 12 months. The district's Simmons Elementary team led the way, reducing energy consumption by 17.2 percent.

"As a former teacher in Woodford County, I am especially proud of the school system's dedication to reducing their energy dependence and being recognized for their endeavors on a national stage," said First Lady Jane Beshear. "Improving energy efficiency in Kentucky has been one of my main initiatives throughout this administration, and I am encouraged by the efforts of Woodford County's schools and the hundreds of other schools across Kentucky that are conserving energy while teaching students 'green' practices that they will carry with them throughout their lives."

This is the fifth-annual ENERGY STAR National Building Competition, and the first time five or more buildings could compete as part of a team. The Woodford County team consisted of four elementary schools, a middle school and a high school and the school district office. The seven-building Woodford County team included Huntertown, Northside, Simmons and Southside

Elementary schools, and Woodford County Middle and High schools. The district's central office building also participated in the energy competition.

The top 10 overall team finishers in this year's competition represented commercial buildings in the retail, business, local government and public school sectors. The Woodford County Schools team was the only district from Kentucky ranking in the top 10. The five-building team from Woodville, Alabama took home the top award by cutting their average energy use by 25 percent. The team included a town hall, community center, chapel, co-op building, and wastewater treatment plant. School energy teams from Red Clay Consolidated School District in Delaware inched above Kentucky with energy use reductions of 11 and 10.6 percent, ranking them in sixth and seventh place.

"This is a tremendous team accomplishment by the Woodford County School District," said Len Peters, secretary of the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet. "Congratulations to the students, teachers, and administrators for showing all of us what can be accomplished through collaboration and commitment to conserving our natural resources."

The team's conservation efforts resulted in a 10 percent reduction in energy use in 2014, saving the district \$62,400 in annual energy costs. Greenhouse gas reductions represent the carbon equivalent of removing 106 cars from the road for one year.

The Woodford County Board of Education adopted an energy management plan and, through a partnership with a neighboring district, utilizes the services of a part-time school energy manager.

"Getting everyone on the same page as it relates to saving energy is critical to the success of the project," said Woodford County Superintendent D. Scott Hawkins. "The board of education knows that every dollar saved on energy can be applied to the classroom and educating their students. With this in mind, all school members, from the building administrators, teachers, staff and students, participated in the competition."

Student energy teams helped find energy savings. The teams provided weekly reports to the building administrators, providing real-time data that could be used to encourage energy-conserving behavior by everyone in the school.

School Energy Manager Jim McClanahan attributes the district's success to simple changes, such as turning off lights, shutting outside windows and doors, and engaging students in discussions about how to save energy in the school and home.

"If you can mobilize 4,000 students to understand and support a program, you will get results," McClanahan said.

Energy use in commercial buildings accounts for nearly 20 percent of total U.S. greenhouse emission at a cost of more than \$100 billion per year. Thousands of businesses and

organizations work with EPA's ENERGY STAR program and are saving billions of dollars and preventing millions of tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere each year.

More information on the ENERGY STAR National Building Competition, including top overall finishers and top finishers by building category, an interactive map of competitors, and a wrap-up report: <http://www.energystar.gov/BattleOfTheBuildings>

For more information about Kentucky's energy initiatives, www.energy.ky.gov

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